



June/July 2007

Volume 15 Issue 2

Legislative Council Holds Spring Meeting

The Legislative Council met May 17 for a debriefing on the 2007 legislative session and to appoint legislators to interim study committees, hear updates about the General Fund budget and the Capitol Restoration project, and to begin preliminary discussions about the 2008 legislative session. Because legislative meeting rooms in the Capitol Annex aren't slated for completion until September, the Council met in a conference room at the Supreme Court Building. Complete minutes of the Legislative Council meeting are available on the Legislature's Web site through the following link:

www.legislature.idaho.gov/lso/legislativecouncil.htm.

General Fund Update

General Fund revenues for April exceeded the Division of Financial Management (DFM) forecast for the month by \$94 million. Most of the increase was due to individual income tax collections. If the trend holds steady, the state is looking at a year-end cash balance of approximately \$214 million for FY 2007.

While April revenues certainly provide important information regarding the state's financial condition, the picture will crystallize further in July, after the close of FY 2007, when the exact amount of the year-end cash balance is known. Another key piece of financial information for the overall budget picture traditionally occurs in August when DFM revises its FY 2008 forecast. Currently, the state is collecting revenues about three percentage points higher than predicted.

Interim Committee Appointments

The Legislative Council appointed legislators to serve on four interim study committees. Leadership is still considering requests for eight new task forces, but those decisions have yet to be finalized. The Council also confirmed the membership of various committees and councils for which it has statutory authority.

Natural Resources Interim Committee - HCR 12

Sen. Gary Schroeder, Co-chair
Sen. Brad Little
Sen. Charles Coiner
Sen. Clint Stennett
Sen. Jeff Siddoway
Sen. Steven Bair (Ad Hoc)
Sen. Lee Heinrich (Ad Hoc)
Sen. Dean Cameron (Ad Hoc)

Rep. Dell Raybould, Co-Chair
Rep. Bert Stevenson
Rep. Scott Bedke
Rep. Mike Moyle
Rep. Donna Pence
Rep. JoAn Wood (Ad Hoc)
Rep. Jim Clark (Ad Hoc)
Rep. Jim Patrick (Ad Hoc)

Staff: Katharine Gerrity, Ray Houston, Toni Hobbs

2007-2008

Legislative Council

Senate

Robert Geddes

Bart Davis

Patti Anne Lodge

John McGee

Clint Stennett

David Langhorst

Kate Kelly

House

Lawrence Denney

Mike Moyle

Gary Collins

Eric Anderson

Wendy Jaquet

Anne Pasley-Stuart

Nicole LeFavour

Energy, Environment and Technology Interim Committee - HCR 25

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Sen. Curt McKenzie, Co-chair | Rep. George Eskridge, Co-Chair |
| Sen. Patti Anne Lodge | Rep. Maxine Bell |
| Sen. Tom Gannon | Rep. Bert Stevenson |
| Sen. Mike Jorgenson | Rep. Bob Nonini |
| Sen. Russell Fulcher | Rep. Ken Andrus |
| Sen. Elliot Werk | Rep. Eric Anderson |
| Sen. Kate Kelly | Rep. Elaine Smith |
| | Rep. Wendy Jaquet (Ad Hoc) |
| | Rep. Mark Snodgrass (Ad Hoc) |

Staff: Mike Nugent, Paige Parker, Toni Hobbs

National Forest System and Woody Biomass Interim Committee - HCR 26-27

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Sen. Joyce Broadsword, Co-chair | Rep. Ken Roberts, Co-chair |
| Sen. Robert Geddes | Rep. Lawrence Denney |
| Sen. Clint Stennett | Rep. Wendy Jaquet |
| Sen. Edgar Malepeai | Rep. George Saylor |

Staff: Paige Parker, Ray Houston, Charmi Arregui

Tax Exemptions Interim Committee - SCR 119

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Sen. Brent Hill, Co-chair | Rep. Dennis Lake, Co-chair |
| Sen. Joe Stegner | Rep. Gary Collins |
| Sen. Tim Corder | Rep. Jim Clark |
| Sen. Lee Heinrich | Rep. Scott Bedke |
| Sen. Jeff Siddoway | Rep. Mike Moyle |
| Sen. David Langhorst | Rep. Nicole LeFavour |
| Sen. Diane Bilyeu | Rep. Bill Killen |

Staff: Mike Nugent, Jason Hancock, Eric Milstead (backup), Charmi Arregui

Statutory Legislative Council Appointments

Idaho Housing and Finance Association - §67-8301

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Sen. Tim Corder | Rep. Phil Hart |
| Sen. Edgar Malepeai | Rep. Anne Pasley-Stuart |

Joint Legislative Oversight Committee Co-chairs - §67-457

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Sen. Shawn Keough, Co-chair | Rep. Margaret Henbest, Co-chair |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|

Pacific Fisheries Legislative Task Force - §67-452

| | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Sen. Joe Stegner | Rep. Fred Wood |
| Sen. David Langhorst | Rep. Mary Lou Shepherd |

Pacific States Radioactive Materials Transportation Committee - §39-3029

Sen. Bart Davis (only legislative appointee)

Idaho Food Quality Assurance Institute - §67-8301

| | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Sen. Tom Gannon | Rep. Maxine Bell |
| Sen. Kate Kelly | Rep. Donna Pence |

Nursing Workforce Advisory Council - §67-4727

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Sen. John McGee | Rep. Fred Wood |
| Sen. Diane Bilyeu | Rep. Margaret Henbest |

Information about interim committees and task forces, including meeting minutes and the calendar of scheduled meetings, is available on the Legislature's web site:

[Interim Committees and Minutes](#)
[Legislative Calendar](#)

JFAC to Meet in North Idaho

The summer meeting of the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee is scheduled June 4-6 in Lewiston, Moscow and Orofino. Agenda items include an update on the General Fund budget, higher education occupancy costs, state employee health insurance funding issues, an Office of Drug Policy progress report, and presentations by the Department of Lands and the Intermountain Forestry Association. JFAC members will tour Lewis-Clark State College, the University of Idaho, a Department of Juvenile Corrections facility, a new visitor's center at Hells Gate State Park, the Idaho Correctional Facility at Orofino, State Hospital North, Orofino Junior High School and area elementary schools.

Staff Contact: Cathy Holland-Smith

Bonnie Trounson Alexander Appointed Chief Clerk of the House

Speaker of the House Lawrence Denney has announced the appointment of Bonnie Trounson Alexander as chief clerk of the Idaho House of Representatives. The position, which had been held by Pamm Juker for 11 years, became available when Pamm resigned to become the chief of staff/communications director at the Department of Agriculture.

Bonnie's experience includes service during the 2007 legislative session as a journal clerk. She has extensive computer experience as a programmer and systems analyst, as well as a background in teaching, finance and writing. Bonnie has also started and operated a variety of businesses. She is an experienced photographer, as well as a ceramic and graphic artist with her own line of greeting cards.



Bonnie Trounson Alexander

A native Idahoan, Bonnie was raised in Wendell and graduated from the University of Idaho with a bachelor of science degree. She has two daughters, Hailey, a sophomore at the University of Georgia, and Audrey, a senior at the University of Arizona. Bonnie recently moved back to Idaho after residing several years in Dallas, Texas.

Please stop by and welcome Bonnie to the legislative family. Her office is located on the third floor of the Capitol Annex in the east wing.

Staff Contact: Sue Frieders

Eric Milstead Joins the Research and Legislation Division

After six years in the Budget and Policy Analysis Division, **Eric Milstead** has taken a position as principal research analyst with the Research and Legislation Division of the Legislative Services Office. He is filling a position left vacant with the departure of **Caralee Lambert**, who has accepted an assistant counsel position with the Idaho State Bar. Eric received his undergraduate degree from Oklahoma State University at Stillwater and a law degree from University of Kansas at Lawrence. Before joining LSO as a budget analyst in 2001, Eric spent three years as an analyst with the Office of Performance Evaluations. His experience also includes several years' service to the Kansas Legislature as a research analyst and fiscal analyst.

Staff Contact: Mike Nugent

Legislative Audits Division Releases Multiple Reports

The Legislative Audits Division recently released the following reports:

- ▶ Department of Health and Welfare
- ▶ Department of Lands
- ▶ Central District Health Department (IV)
- ▶ PILT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes)
- ▶ Idaho Tax Commission
- ▶ Division of Environmental Quality, Clean Water State Revolving Fund
- ▶ Division of Environmental Quality, Drinking Water State Revolving Fund
- ▶ Idaho Food Quality Assurance Institute
- ▶ Department of Parks and Recreation
- ▶ Division of Professional-Technical Education
- ▶ Commission on Aging
- ▶ Office of the State Treasurer
- ▶ Department of Commerce and Labor
- ▶ Board of Dentistry
- ▶ Statewide Federal Single Audit

These audit reports, including the most recent report regarding the Department of Health and Welfare and the use of TANF funds, can be found on the Legislature's Web site, through a link in "Publications" located in the top left menu bar. Reports may also be accessed through the following link: legislature.idaho.gov/audit/reports/summaries.htm

Audit Staff Update

The Legislative Audits Division welcomed three new staff members in May.

Kathleen Watkins has returned to the Audits Division after four years, during which time she worked for Idaho Power and Washington Group International. Kathleen is a certified public accountant and earned a master of accountancy degree from the University of Idaho.

Maresa Blessinger earned her bachelor of science degree in accounting at the University of Idaho. Maresa has worked for various private businesses, Washington Group International and, most recently, for the Idaho Tax Commission.

Sherie Hoid worked for the private accounting firm of Eide Bailly, LLC, and previously for private firms in Nevada. She earned a bachelor of science degree in accounting from the University of Nevada at Reno.

Staff Contact: Don Berg

The Legislative Audits Division is now located on the second floor of the Department of Lands Building at 954 W. Jefferson Street in Boise. Staff telephone numbers remain unchanged, as does the mailing address. You can reach the Audits Division by calling 334-2475.

OPE Releases Reports on Education Issues

Use of Average Daily Attendance in Public Education Funding

In February 2007, the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee (JLOC) heard a report by the Office of Performance Evaluations on the use of average daily attendance in public education funding. Evaluators found no evidence to suggest that schools manipulated attendance to gain increased funding, and the report concludes that schools generally report average daily attendance correctly.

The report notes concerns in two areas: (1) the design of the funding formula may occasionally result in unexpected and inequitable funding for smaller districts and charters; and (2) some schools are inaccurately reporting half-day and part-time attendance, as well as attendance for students enrolled in multiple schools, virtual schools or distance learning programs. The report provides the Board of Education and the Department of Education with seven recommendations to reduce inaccuracies. JLOC directed staff to further study the funding formula and to provide a report to the committee by the beginning of the 2008 legislative session.

Virtual Charter School Operations

In March 2007, OPE reported to JLOC on the operations of Idaho's virtual charter schools. The report finds that the state needs to provide clear guidelines and establish an oversight mechanism for virtual school operations. Idaho Code currently does not provide a framework within which virtual schools may operate. As a result, virtual schools vary widely in their operations, and the state's oversight process does not address curriculum development, delivery of instruction and the types and frequency of communication between students and teachers. The report provides eight recommendations for the Legislature, the Board of Education and the Public Charter School Commission to strengthen guidelines and oversight. JLOC requested a further study of virtual charter school revenues, expenditures and student performance, which will be released by the 2008 session.

Staff Update

Jared Tatro started at OPE in February after earning a master of public administration degree from Boise State University. Prior to OPE, he worked as a public records coordinator with the Department of Environmental Quality and managed a local restaurant. He and his wife have recently become the parents of a baby boy.

Jennifer Hill comes to the office from the Idaho Senate, where she served as a journal clerk during the 2007 session. She and her family recently moved to Boise from Twin Falls, her hometown. She earned a master of arts degree in communication from Boise State University. Jennifer also worked for the Office of the State Controller, helping to edit the book, *21st Century Leadership*. She also has experience in community development planning, grant writing and teaching college-level English and communication courses.

Staff Contact: Rakesh Mohan

The Office of Performance Evaluations continues to be located in the basement of the J.R. Williams Building, Suite 10. The office number is 334-3880. Reports published by OPE are available online at www.idaho.gov/ope

Relocation Update

We did it! We're moved and settled into the Capitol Annex at 514 W. Jefferson Street for the next 30 months. Beginning April 13, over the course of three days, all year-round staff of the House, Senate and Legislative Services Office moved into their new offices.

The IT staff worked tirelessly throughout the weekend to have the computer network and telephone system up and running. In the week that followed, the staff unpacked their offices and got right back to work. Meanwhile, the movers were taking the remaining furnishings out of the Capitol and putting them into storage. Surplus items were donated to the Idaho Youth Ranch and to the Computers for Kids program. Additionally, the Idaho Historical Society was inundated with furnishings to be restored. Peasley Moving Company estimates it took the equivalent of 16-20 semi-truckloads just to move the Legislative Branch.

The entire Statehouse has been vacated, with [offices relocated throughout the Capitol Mall area](#). Although the Capitol Building is officially closed, you will be able to watch the construction in progress! The Capitol Commission is installing a webcam for live shots at the Capitol within the next few weeks. Watch the Legislature's home page for a link when the camera is operational.

Staff Contact: Robyn Lockett

Legislative Perspective

An Internet Newsletter —

Legislative Services Office
Idaho State Legislature
Capitol Annex, First Floor
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, Idaho 83720-0054

Phone: 208/334-2475

Fax: 208/334-2125

URL: legislature.idaho.gov

Proposed Administrative Rules

Education, Board of

08.01.11 Registration, Postsecondary Educ. Institutions/Rewrite
08.01.11 Non-accredited Institutions & Courses/Repeal

Governor, Office of the

15.01.02 Area Agency Adult Protection Programs

Health and Welfare, Department of

16.03.10 Medicaid Enhanced Plan Benefits
16.03.17 Medicare/Medicaid Coordinated Plan Benefits
16.06.01 Rules Governing Family & Children's Services

PERSI

59.01.07 PERSI/Balance Interest Credited to Member Accounts

Staff Contact: Charmi Arregui